MISSION OF THE SOUTH TO CLOTHE THE WORLD.

(Continued from First Page.)

Many of the men—the so-called great "captains of industry"—have not been after the acquisition of the mere dollar, but they have honestly believed that the greatest good to this country lay along the lines of concentrated capitalism, and they have simply overdone this line of endeavor—to such an extent that one of them has uttered the sentiment that "to die rich is to die disgraced." This condition has left for the harmonious development of governmental science a mediocre statesmanship utterly destitute of true constructive genius, and with no vision that enables it to comprehend an evolutionary development that becomes more and more complex as the nation is lifted into loftier and larger spheres of being.

This is what primary elections mean—the initiative, referendum and recall. These cannot be sneered out of existence, and some machinery must be devised to permit a full expression of national opinion on public questions as often as it may be needed, without the trouble, expense and demoralization of such elections as we now have, depressing business, and throwing our citizenship into confusion. Our elections have become almost a national curse. There is no reason why the post office department of this government could not do all of this work with no more trouble to the average citizen than is required to write a short note. No real reform has ever been attempted along this line, and the masses of the people until recently have acquiesced in the unchanging status of the republic, and the political barnacles will never suggest any change which would interfere with the methods of franchise which keeps them in power.

Our political mechanism is so cumbersome and so wrapped up in red tape that the average business man cannot do his duty as a citizen without a degree of sacrifice that he refuses to submit to. Here is where the professional politician comes in, and with his pirate code of ethics, governs the country. Just as the Pretorian legions sold Rome's imperial sceptre to the highest bidder, so do the machine politicians in the great centers of population barter away the rights and prosperity of productive labor for trust-made gold in this republic.

Is Farmer to Be Forced?

There has been a great complaint about the high cost of living. That is all very well; but what about the profits of productive labor? The only way to cheapen the cost of living is for more people to live on the farms, and they will never do so unless the profits are made more attractive. What is there to keep the energetic and ambitious boy on the farm? The cry, "back to the farm!" is a mockery. The city calls, and the lights of the "great white way" blind his eyes to the beauties of country lanes and blooming fields. He hastens to find fortune in the market place, where traffic makes gold by its very touch. The farm is abandoned as the last resort and fixed fate of the dullard and incompetent.

History teaches us that nations draw their true wisdom, unselfish patriotism and untainted virtues from the deep wells of a contented agriculture; from those who live in the quiet country places of the land, who have the time to think soberly, who live temperately, and commune with God in the temple of his untarnished skies. These are nation builders and nation savers. How can we maintain this mighty fortress in the soul of a people, if we destroy, or permit to be destroyed, the comfort and poise of mind so dependent upon a fair reward for toil?

We have no standards set by noble birth in America. It is all based on the individual. Our government is absolutely original in this respect, and we have reached a point of complex commercial and political life, where we must either take a step forward or backward. With the problems confronting us, it is impossible to stand still. The purely selfish appropriation of the comforts and blessings of material life for the use of favored classes is the rock upon which other nations have foundered. Culture, refinement and education will not save us. Marie Antoinette was more elegant, possibly, than the most fashionable woman of to-day, and yet this did not save her from the axe. The best thought of America to-day should be, how to use our land and its products, our labor and its fruits to develop good living and sweet prosperity for our people as a whole.

The figures of the census show that the urban population is increasing 23 per cent faster than the country population. The cities have already advanced in political power to where they not only out-wit and out-talk the rural population, but out-vote them.

A great work is being done by our agricultural departments, both State and national, to encourage the production of food stuffs, but the most that can ever be accomplished is to make our farms self-sustaining. For a money crop cotton is and must ever remain our dependence

The Federal government is to spend about $275,000 a year in this State teaching our people to grow food and stock.

There is more money spent teaching girls to can tomatoes than I have to organize the machinery to handle a hundred million dollars worth of cotton.

Are the fiscal and economic policies of this government going to undertake to compel productive labor, at less and less cost, to feed an ever-increasing urban population?

We are constantly reminded and taught to emulate that mythological farmer who made two blades of grass grow where one grew before. The government is sending out experts to teach scientific agriculture. We are urged to grow two bales of cotton where we grew one before, but it seems to be taken for granted that the extra blade of grass or bale of cotton must go to the consumer, instead of to the man who made it grow.

The South's Monopoly.

We have seen cotton (since last August) go from five cents to ten cents a pound, in the face of the largest crop ever made.

Our cotton crop for the last thirty years has been the corner-stone of international finance. The South has a practical monopoly in the production of cotton, and the needs of the world each year call for more cotton. There has never been a nation on earth with such a monopoly of a vital product as the South has on cotton. All in vain Great Britain and Russia have attempted to break this monopoly. Our percentage shows a steady increase with each decade. Egypt produces a beautiful staple, but the area fit for cotton is not more than one-fourth the size of South Carolina, and cannot be increased. England has experimented in Africa, but the fibre is so coarse that it has little commercial value. Russia is growing some cotton in Central Asia, but the area is very limited, and in that dry climate irrigation must be resorted to.

No one crop has ever had so wide an influence, and its future power in making human history can hardly be exaggerated. Each fall a great tide of gold is brought in from abroad that enables the financiers of this country to dictate to the balance of the world. And yet the people who produce that cotton, and the section in which it is produced, are the poorest, per capita, in the United States. Under present financial conditions we have been forced to market a twelve-months' supply in three months, and then in the spring, after the crop has passed out of the hands of the producers, speculators and middle-men have reaped a profit, as now, of 75 per cent on their investment.

The people of the South should all unite in an effort to place cotton upon a safe, stable basis. Then the manufacturer would know just what to do. No business can be profitable with the fluctuations in price running from 6 to 16 cents for this great crop.

Is it to Be Paternalism or Impoverishment?

One of the objections urged to the State warehouse system is paternalism. I say no, it is only justice. For 100 years the protecting arms of this government has been thrown around, not the producer, but the manufacturer of cotton. He has been protected by a monopoly in the home market. There has not been a time in fifty years when you could not buy cotton goods cheaper in Europe than you could in South Carolina, where the cotton is grown. What a condition we have every year in the fall when the cry of over-production is raised, as it was last August! This is the only country in the world where famine comes because of plenty. We hear every few years of famine in other countries because of crop failures. In the South every fall we face bankruptcy and are threatened with ruin, not because of crop failures, but because we do make a bountiful crop. Look at this country last October and look at the price of cotton to-day, with a great war in progress and the largest crop on record, and yet with the prices nearly 100 per cent above what they were then! Am I to starve to death, not because I have nothing to eat, but because the table is loaded with food? If we make no crop it is ruin, and if we make a crop it is ruin, too. It is the old predestination doctrine, "You can and you can't; you will and you won't; you are damned if you do, and you are damned if you don't." That is just what the cotton planters are face to face with every year at the marketing period. We market our crop without any system whatever. Beginning in the Southwest, and running to the northernmost limit of the cotton belt, there is a mad rush to sell. We are competitors one with the other—sell, sell for whatever you can get; debts and rent liens and crop mortgages all pressing and shoving the weak and the helpless. The laws of any country which permit such destruction of value are unjust and unworthy a Christian people. I would not see our farmers organize a piratical trust or a predatory combination, but I do say that, as all seem agreed, that the trust is the devil of modern commerce, that the best way to fight the devil is with fire. I do advocate a self-defense trust with our State governments behind it. We have tried every other plan to secure a fair return for our products and interest on our investments, and we are less than men, and deserve the sting of poverty, if we do not assert ourselves in defense of our rights. Our whole scheme of national government for fifty years has revolvel around protection by the government to certain classes and individuals. Tariff, money and transportation are the foundation of commercial life. The tariff laws under which we live—one of them the Dingley Act, in its very title, "An Act to encourage and to protect American industries." Where does the farmer get anything out of this? He is compelled to buy in the home market all that he consumes, and he sells in the open market of the world. What does he get out of the money monopoly that has existed under the National Banking Act since 1863, except the privilege of paying high interest rates? What has he got except high freight rates from the railroads built out of the profits of selling the public lands, really costing the original builders nothing? **The products of the farm must pay dividends on the watered stock and over-production!** Certainly legislation conferring special privileges is the foundation of every great, swollen fortune in this country. The farmer has contributed every time he bought a plow, hoe or trace chain. These great trusts fix the price of every single thing that is bought on the farm. Is the farmer to have no voice in pricing what he sells? Our monopoly, however, does not depend on special legislation. God gave it to us. He safeguarded its possession by climate and by soil. Let the Legislatures of every cotton State follow the lead of South Carolina and say to the balance of the world that from now henceforth and forever we, too, intend to have a monopoly price for a monopoly product. Place ourselves in a position to make this no idle threat, and the victory is won.

What chance have unorganized millions, scattered over thirteen States, in a contest with expert financial strategy, backed by unlimited capital? What the people cannot do for themselves individually is within the province and the duty of the government to do for them. The government helps the citizen to help himself. This is no socialism; it is patriotism. I care not whether you call it paternalism or not. Better paternalism than agricultural impoverishment. Better that cotton should wear the crown of a king than the shackles of a slave. Shall we have the courage to strike one brave blow for a righteous system of political economy, or shall the South continue to cringe and cower to an ever-invading money tyrant? Our lands are an unwieldy, impossible sort of security, but the product of our land—cotton—is always convertible into gold at a moment's notice. The remedy is to transform cotton into a negotiable security. The State warehouse certificates are an ideal form of credit, and when they come into general use they will impart an artificial value to every acre of cotton land and make the South rich in the next twenty-five years beyond our wildest dream.

Contraction of Credits, Not Over-production.

We ask no favor of the government except a free field and a fair fight. We expect nothing except what we earn by honest toil, but we do deny the right of any class to use the credits which we create to destroy our market and to deliver us over to antagonistic interests. They talk to us about the law of supply and demand. Cotton sold in my town on the streets in October at five cents. It is now bringing twice as much, and this difference of 100 per cent lies in the extension of credit, not in the demand for cotton.

It is not so often over-production of cotton, as contraction of credits and faulty distribution that make for lower prices. Statistics prove that the production of cotton has not kept pace with the consumption. New uses are found for it each year. It has almost supplanted wool and silk. It leads in the great industrial advance, and it can be made to bring a fair return to those who produce it. From the socks on our feet to the hats on our heads, from undershirt to overcoat, it is cotton. There are one hundred million people in the United States to-day, and if they were able it is not extravagant to say that they would each use ten dollars worth of cotton every year. This would consume the entire crop of the United States and leave nothing for the balance of the world. The farmers of the South hold the key to the situation. Wall Street can sell all the future cotton they please, but the mills cannot spin the kind of cotton that Wall Street sells. You can't clothe people with paper contracts. We have the actual cotton, and it is spot cotton, not paper cotton, which is king. All that the South has to do is to put herself in a situation to hold the crop and demand a fair price for it. Sooner or later these millions of future contracts that are now being sold in the cotton exchange of New York will fall due, and then speculators must come to us for the spot cotton.

South Carolina Always a Leader.

The population of the world is estimated at about 1,500,000,000 people. About 500,000,000 regularly wear clothes; 750,000,000 are partially clad, and 250,000,000 go naked, and it has been estimated that to clothe the entire population of the entire world at the present rate of pounds per capita would require 50,000,000 bales of cotton of 500 pounds each. It is, therefore, plain that the production of cotton will go on extending until the inhabited earth is clothed with the product of our fields, for cotton at 25 cents is the cheapest clothing known to man. It is the mission of the South to clothe the world, but if she is to do so there must be a reasonable profit for the land owner and the laborer. South Carolina, true to her traditions in the past, is leading this great industrial movement for stabilizing the price of cotton. W. P. G. Harding, of the Federal Reserve Board, in an address last February to the American Bankers' Institute, said that out of the agitation which he had last fall "that the only thing worth while was the excellent warehouse system in this State." Later he gave me letters to the leading financiers of New York City, in which he stated that South Carolina was far in advance of anything which had been attempted and her State warehouse system was a model for the other States to follow. I feel that I can assure him that South Carolina will do her full duty. Our little State has a glorious history, and has played her part well in every great national crisis. In 1787 John Rutledge delivered his ultimatum to the convention which formed the constitution, and from that time to the day when her civilization was overturned by war her voice has been potent in the councils of this nation. God speed the day when, forgetting petty jealousies and small politics, her statesmanship will again shape national policies. She once led the South not only politically, but industrially. In 1835 she had the longest line of railroad in the world, and when the war came was preparing for the Blue Ridge Railroad to the West. In 1765, when the colonies were considering what course to pursue, South Carolina led the way by declaring for continental unity. This was the real beginning of the revolution and the foundation of the Federal Constitution under which we are to-day living. She was the first to take this bold step, and the first of the thirteen colonies to form a constitutional government. Bancroft, the great historian, declares that South Carolina formed the Union. The last blood of the revolution was shed upon South Carolina soil, and after the British had captured Boston, New York and Philadelphia, from Camden to Cowpens and King's Mountain was the real bloody battle ground that ended in the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown. When the war ended South Carolina was the largest creditor State, because she had furnished more actual money to the cause of independence than any other State in the Union.

State System a Success.

When the South Carolina Legislature, in its extra session, passed the State warehouse bill, and I was selected to put it in operation, I was appalled at the magnitude of the task and the small means at my command. I feel that I can to-day say that it will be a success, because, through the aid rendered me by Mr. Harding, I have been able to command the attention of the great financiers of this country, who have expressed themselves as being satisfied that the State warehouse receipt puts cotton into a negotiable form. There is no difficulty whatever in obtaining money at the lowest rate of interest on a State warehouse receipt.

I am encouraging the farmers in each community to build warehouses on their own farms, and then during the fall months, when the price of cotton does not show a fair profit, to use these receipts to borrrw money and pay their debts. If the system can be extended, as now seems likely, into the other States of the South, an inter-State board can be formed and a minimum agreed upon, so that it will not be necessary ever to sell another bale of cotton below the cost of production. If the State warehouse bill had never done anything else except reduce insurance rates in South Carolina it would be worth millions of dollars to all the people of this State. I have had more trouble with the insurance rates than anything else connected with the operation of the system. There was a distinction made between a warehouse in the country and in a fourth-class town. On the country warehouse the rate would be $3.50 while in a fourth-class town, where there were no waterworks and no more protection against the fire than in the country, the rate would be $1.75 per hundred dollars. Without going into the details, the insurance companies were all quick to realize the superiority in the moral risk of a State warehouse, and they were prompt to offer us a reduction of 10 per cent per hundred on cotton in a State warehouse over that stored in a private or corporate owned warehouse. But it was only after great difficulty that I secured a reduction of about 100 per cent on the country risk, and also from 25 to 33 1-3 per cent on all cotton in State warehouses, and I have no doubt that in the future the rates on cotton stored in State warehouses will be further reduced.

Cotton Must Be Sold from Farm to Mill.

One of the most important features connected with the State warehouse system—and it is this that has attracted me more than anything else—were the additional powers conferred by the last General Assembly authorizing the Commissioner to negotiate loans and make sales of cotton direct. Fortunately, with the assistance of Mr. Harding I have made satisfactory arrangements so far as negotiating loans is concerned; but the great burden that rests upon the cotton planter is the many middlemen who get a profit between the farmer and the mill. There is a cotton ship now tied up in the French prize court whose owners recently stated under oath that they bought the vessel for $165,000 and that the freight on this one cargo would pay for the vessel. The cotton was contracted for delivery in Germany at 22 cents a pound. The insurance was about two cents a pound. I do not know what was paid the farmer for the cotton, but as it was bought early, I guess around six and a half cents. This would leave a net profit of about eight cents, or forty dollars a bale, to the speculators—more than the farmer who grew it received. Three years ago I saw a Texas paper in which it was stated that a planter in Texas put a note in a bale of cotton, with an addressed envelope, and requested the manufacturer to write and tell him what he paid for the cotton at the mill; the kind of goods into which it was converted, and the profits he expected to make on it. In a few months a reply came back from Germany, in which it was stated that the mill had paid 16 cents a pound for the cotton, and giving the class of goods into which it was converted, and saying that they expected to make a profit of about $300 on the manufacture of the cotton. The farmer received about 9 cents—so he stated in the letter—for the cotton; so that there was 7 cents a pound, $35 a bale, that went in profits and expenses to six or eight middle-men standing between that farmer and the cotton mill in Germany. Now, there is no reason in the world why, with the proper facilities, I could not, as Warehouse Commissioner, sell cotton from a State warehouse on a plantation in South Carolina direct to a cotton mill anywhere in the world. We have daily reports that come into the office from every warehouse in the State, which are laid on my desk every morning, that disclose the number of bales of cotton, the grade of each bale and its weight. If there was a ship in Charleston, and we had a compress in Columbia, and warehouse facilities, I could sell cotton from every county in the State, and bring it at one rate of freight to the compress in Columbia; have it compressed and go direct on board of the ship from the cars, and from there to the cotton mill in Germany or England, and it would never be touched by any one else. All that I would have to do would be to see to it that the grades came fully up to the standard, and, in case they fell below, have a business system that would enable me to go back and make reclamation from the party for whom the cotton was sold. If that were done, I have made the calculation that in time of peace it would add at least three cents a pound to the value of every bale of cotton, and that would amount in one year in the State of South Carolina to about $15,000,000. Of course I realize the fact and expect that any system as far-reaching as that would meet with the most strenuous opposition, because every middle-man who is either directly or indirectly concerned would fight bitterly a change of that sort. They don't realize that in the long run it is best for the entire public, themselves included, that we have some uniform system of handling and marketing our cotton crop.

Graders Must Be Licensed.

There is another thing: The United States government has established standard grades for cotton, and yet every year the cotton exporters and buyers in every State in the South take millions of dollars out of the pockets of the people by systematically under-grading cotton. I myself have shipped cotton from South Carolina to New York to be delivered on contract there, and in one instance the grades given me by the New York cotton exchange were 65 points above that of the local buyers in the town of Bennettsville. There must be some law passed that will not only adopt the definite and fixed standards of the United States government, but the graders must be licensed and required to grade that cotton accurately. Why, think of the system of grades upon which cotton is bought and sold in the open markets in the towns of South Carolina, and the way it is practiced in the exchanges of this country. If you buy 100 bales through the New Orleans or New York exchange, and that cotton is tendered to you, the man who tenders it is not permitted to grade it; you are not permitted to grade it; but they have sworn, disinterested graders and the graders do not know to whom that cotton belongs. It is carried to them on numbers, and they grade it without the slightest knowledge as to its ownership. Now, you take it in South Carolina, and every bit of the grading is done by the purchaser of the cotton. You have either got to let him have your cotton that way, or not sell it at all. When he goes to tender it on contract it is done disinterestedly, and I doubt exceedingly if there is one bale of cotton out of 1,000 that is bought in South Carolina in the open market from the farm that when the buyer comes to sell it to the mill he doesn't make a profit on the grading over and above the price that he pays you for the cotton.

Dreams.

The South has it in her power, by utilizing the vast commercial credit incident to handling this great monopoly crop, to make herself the dominant power in finance and civilization. I have been called a dreamer, and I wish that I were worthy to take my place among the great dreamers of this world. But the gift is not mine to pierce the veil of doubt and look into the face of unborn time. I only stumble and falter in darkness, see but dimly, and I feel that, so far as I am concerned, I have done about all that I can ever do in this great work, and that others must soon take it up and carry it forward to success. Herbert Kaufman says, "Dreams are architects of fact." If that be true, then—

"What matters sneers and cynicism?

"This world is made up for the most part of those who take, but never give, sharing in all, but sparing naught; who cheer a grudge, but grudge a cheer.

"Wherefore the paths of progress have been sobs of blood dropped from the broken hearts of dreamers.

"Makers of empires, they have fought for higher things than empires, and higher seats than thrones.

"Grief has only streaked their heads with silver, but has never greyed their hopes.

"Dreamers are argonauts, the seekers of the priceless fleece of Truth—

"Through all the ages the voice of destiny calls them from the unbroken vasts.

"They dare uncharted seas, because they are the makers of the chart.

"With only cloth of courage at the mast and no compass save their dreams, they sail away undaunted for the far, blind shores.

"Their brains have wrought all human miracles; in lace of stone their spires stab the skies, and their golden crosses kiss the sun.

"A great ship a few months ago, stricken to death by an iceberg, shivers, trembles, and groans. A cry for help, that mystery the wireless, flashes hundreds of miles across the seas, because Marconi dreamed.

"Wings of canvbas now beat the air and add the highways of the eagle to the human paths.

"One man drew lightning with a kite from the clouds, another sitting by the fire sees the steady escape of steam from the kettle. The dreams of Franklin, Watts, Morse and hundreds of others have girdled the globe with bands of steel and annihilated space.

(Concluded on Page 7, Column 2.)